

Message Text

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UNCLAS JIDDA 6209

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, SA

SUBJECT: PROPOSED SAUDI DESALINATION PROJECTS AND U.S. RESPONSE

1. IN RECENT DISCUSSION WITH YOUSSEF ELAKEEL, VICE GOVERNOR, SALINE WATER CONVERSION CORPORATION, HE RE-ITERATED SAUDI DISAPPOINTMENT WITH U.S. RESPONSE TO DATE REGARDING PROJECTED \$15 BILLION SAG EXPENDITURE ON DESALINATION DURING CURRENT FIVE YEAR PLAN. HE EMPHASIZED THAT MORE U.S. CONSORTIUMS MUST TAKE PART IN THE BIDDING IF U.S. HOPES TO GET A DECENT SHARE OF THE CONTRACTS.

2. ELAKEEL REMAINS CONVINCED THAT PAUCITY OF U.S. RESPONSE BASED ON A) LACK OF ASSISTANCE BY USG TO AMERICAN FIRMS; AND B) FAILURE OF USG TO MAKE KNOWN TO POTENTIAL EXPORTERS AND CONTRACTORS THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF SAUDI MARKET AND IMPORTANCE OF GETTING INVOLVED NOW. ELAKEEL VISITED SEVERAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AFTER HIS JULY VISIT TO U.S. AND CONTRASTED THE DEGREE OF FRUSTRATION HE FELT IN U.S. TO WILLINGNESS OF EUROPEAN (AND, OF COURSE, JAPANESE) GOVERNMENTS AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE TO WORK IN TANDEM TO HANDLE PROPOSED PROJECTS.

3. MR. ELAKEEL MENTIONED SAUDI SATISFACTION WITH PAST PERFORMANCE OF AQUA CHEM OF WAUKESHA, WISCONSIN AND THEIR DESIRABILITY IN WORKING ON FUTURE PROJECTS. AFTER AQUA CHEM'S PURCHASE SEVERAL YEARS AGO BY COCO-COLA, THEY WERE AUTOMATICALLY ADDED TO THE LIST OF BLACKLISTED

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COMPANIES. ELAKEEL SAID HE HAS HEARD OF SEVERAL SAUDI

BUSINESSMEN WHO HAVE A STRONG INTEREST IN PURCHASING
AQUA CHEM FROM COCA-COLA.
AKINS

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